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ABSTRACT

The President's Task Force on Rural Development (established in September of 1969) reviewed the effectiveness of rural assistance programs and made recommendations as to what might be done in the private and public sectors to stimulate rural development. Included are recommendations for streamlining Federal programs, strengthening state and local participation, and utilizing private enterprise in rural development. Recommendations are also given for financing rural development and for improving nutrition, welfare assistance, health, housing, education, and transportation in rural areas. A discussion of research for a better rural environment concludes this report to President Nixon. (LS)

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A NEW LIFE FOR THE COUNTRY

The Report of
The President's Task Force on
Rural Development

March 1970

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The President's Task Force on Rural Development

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

JANUARY 12, 1970.

President RICHARD M. NIXON
The White House
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: On behalf of the President's Task Force on Rural Development, it is my pleasure to transmit the attached copy of our final report, *A New Life for the Country*.

This report represents our collective best judgment on the rural development needs and opportunities facing our Nation in the years ahead. The diversity of topics treated in the report is indicative of the breadth of effort that will be required.

The Task Force wishes to express its appreciation to the many organizations, agencies, and individuals who contributed to the success of this undertaking. The report benefited measurably from this assistance. We are especially indebted to a member of the Task Force, Mr. Claude W. Gifford, for his able drafting of the report.

On behalf of all members of the Task Force, I want to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for giving us the opportunity to help you deal with an issue that is of such critical importance to the future welfare of our country. It is our desire to respond fully if we can be of help in elaborating upon these recommendations or assisting in their implementation.

Respectfully yours,

MRS. HAVEN SMITH, *Chairman*.

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SEPTEMBER 29, 1969

The White House

The President today announced the establishment of the Task Force on Rural Development. Mrs. Haven Smith, National Chairman of the American Farm Bureau Women, will chair the Task Force.

The Task Force on Rural Development will review the effectiveness of present rural assistance programs, and make recommendations as to what might be done in the private and public sectors to stimulate rural development.

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CHAPTER I

Why Rural Development is Vital to the Nation

President Richard M. Nixon, on September 29, 1969, appointed a Task Force on Rural Development. The charge he made to the Task Force was to recommend "what might be done in the private and public sectors to stimulate rural development."

The purpose of rural development is to create job opportunities, community services, a better quality of living, and an improved social and physical environment in the small cities, towns, villages, and farm communities in rural America.

There was an urgency that prompted the President to seek the advice and counsel of a group of private citizens on rural development. And the urgency was not alone in countryside rural areas.

Look first at the Nation's cities: Today's metropolitan cities, with their great cultural advantages, wealth, educational opportunities, and huge commercial industries and businesses are monuments to man's progress.

But these same large cities are slowly strangling themselves. Their transportation arteries are becoming so clogged that commerce is slowed and walking is frequently the fastest method of moving about in downtown areas. People in central city residential areas are packed so uncomfortably and unnaturally together, elbow to elbow, without room to roam, unmasked of privacy, that their individual irritations and frustrations erupt, tearing apart the fabric of the family and society. Housing suffers decay—and individual hopes and pride crumble with the buildings, helping spawn the crime that roams the streets. Factories, automobiles, businesses, homes, and individuals spew out their wastes, polluting the air, the water, and the streets.

Some cities have become huge, ungainly, and unkempt organisms that in noisy and unsightly paroxysms regurgitate their wastes upon themselves.

The great threat that now faces us is that the social and economic ills of the Nation's inner cities may worsen and spread over entire urban

areas, infecting even the entire national structure unless we act together with intelligence to prevent it. Even now, 70 percent of our people are jammed onto 2 percent of the Nation's land. But if present trends continue, by the year 2000 more than 174 million people will be huddled in cities concentrated in five small geographic areas.

The paradox is that this need not happen—metropolitan cities need not be this way. It occurs because people do not satisfactorily plan together for their long-term future. The congestion that characterizes many cities is partly the result of man's inability to foresee what might happen—but more importantly it is the result of man's failure to work together to prevent what he knows will likely happen.

Do we need to remind ourselves more forcefully that when people and industry are jammed together, it brings on the four plagues of compaction: pollution, transportation paralysis, housing blight, and a crime-infested fractured society?

Already, estimates are made that it would cost $100 billion annually for 10 years of corrective surgery to rebuild and remodel our big cities—much of it to repair past mistakes brought on by poor planning, or lack of it.

If the metropolitan cities were without such present and impending problems, there would be less concern over rural countryside America. If the cities were totally wholesome physical and social environments with attractive opportunities for living that pulled disadvantaged rural people to them to the immediate benefit of both the rural and urban area, we could forget rural development and count our blessings. Unfortunately such is not the case.

Rural migration to the city compounds the problems of metropolitan compaction. Yet, the answer to the problem of rural migration and the solution to the central city plagues are as close by as America's countryside.

This is what rural development is all about. It is taking action now to create more economic opportunities and a better environment in countryside America—which will simultaneously help create more beautiful, livable American urban areas with expanded opportunities and a better quality of environment for urban dwellers.

In some respects, it is similar to downstream flood control. The best flood prevention measures are to catch and hold the water upstream in beneficial uses. Thus both those living upstream and downstream are benefitted.

The fact that the immediate concern of rural development focuses on the 65 million people who live in nonmetropolitan America—and that the urgent challenge is to improve the opportunities for these people through private institutions, private initiative and government—does not alter the fact that the real goal is to benefit simultaneously the 140 million

people who now live in metropolitan areas, and the millions more who will live there by the end of this century.

If this is to be a happy and healthy Nation in the years ahead, our growing industry and our increasing population must spread out instead of continuing to pile people and industrial plants into compacted urban areas.

It is in the rural countryside areas that we can find generous resources of clean air, clear water, living space, recreation, scenic beauty, transportation potential, tranquility and inspiration for tomorrow's people. And it is there that we can most readily and economically develop and preserve these natural resources in living harmony with man as our population expands in the generations ahead.

How Rapid Growth Creates Problems in Cities and the Countryside

A hundred years ago, the Nation was 85 percent rural and 15 percent urban. Today it is 65 percent urban and 35 percent rural. What was "farm" yesterday became "rural" and then "urban." This kind of economic growth and transition is still going on—and the parts are interrelated.

The movement of our people from rural areas to the city is the result of the dynamic, rapid economic growth of the Nation. As our farmers increase their productivity dramatically, people in other pursuits get their food for a decreasing portion of their total income.

As more urban income is "released" from covering the basic necessities of life, money is spent for other things—which creates new jobs and economic opportunities. People who are no longer needed in rural areas—a surplus created by their own advancing productivity—then migrate toward the cities and the new jobs that have been created there.

This kind of economic growth and transition has been going on since the beginning of the Nation. It has been a healthy development that has created a national affluence unmatched in history. And the end is not in sight. Farm output is continuing to increase vigorously. Production per man-hour on farms is growing two to three times faster than production per man-hour in the rest of the economy. So the farm-to-city wave of economic growth is continuing at a dynamic pace. And all of society is largely responsible, since it has contributed both to the pace of the agricultural growth which spawned the enormous farm output and to the resulting problems.

The Nation has long maintained a public policy of encouraging increased production on farms—through opening up the homestead lands of the West; granting land to railroads to lace the countryside with ribbons of steel to carry farm products to population centers; building farm-to-market roads to speed the bounty from the land to the city;

creating agricultural college experiment stations to find how to grow two blades of grass where one grew before; organizing the Extension Service to demonstrate new and more productive methods to farmers; and establishing Land-Grant universities to teach technical agriculture and mechanic arts to farm boys and girls who entered agribusiness companies which, in turn, made scientific discoveries that boosted agricultural output.

The cornucopia of agricultural abundance that has sprung from this public policy—and from the hard work of farm families—has been passed along to urban America so that residents of cities can eat better and more cheaply than any people on earth, now or ever before.

But rural residents have not shared equally in the fruits of their own production. The development that energizes the farm-to-city wave of economic growth has brought problems to rural America. This kind of rapid growth demands large, constant and sometimes painful adjustments on farms and in rural areas. The abundance causes low farm prices, reducing the profit per unit of production (bushels, bales or pounds), so that farmers must expand their farms to handle more units of production (bushels and bales) to maintain a living income. Tremendous economic pressures are brought on farmers to get bigger still to meet the costs of new machinery and better seeds and chemicals that will increase output enough so that farmers can keep up with the shrinking profit per bushel or bale.

These economic pressures cause farms to mechanize and become larger by absorbing other farms. This leaves a surplus of people—people who sometimes aren't adequately educated or trained to handle jobs in the cities. Some farmers, who can't keep up with the pace of increasing farm technology and size, find themselves too old, and too socially set in their environment to move on to opportunities elsewhere. Many of those "left behind" by economic events are trapped in poverty and lack adequate housing and minimum health care. Many rural people are thus the victims of agricultural progress—a progress that is aided and abetted by a public policy directed toward high farm production and low food prices.

Many who are passed by are the farm day laborers, sharecroppers and tenants, both black and white. But the blacks have greater problems of adapting to the new forces. Disadvantaged by lack of education, a shortage of capital and by the absence of equal opportunity, the blacks bear a heavier share of the burden. In both hope and desperation they have turned to the cities to seek an answer—many to find jobs, but a disproportionate number to find welfare and slum housing.

It isn't only farm people who suffer. Many of today's rural towns were made for the kind of farming, services, transportation and distribution system that we had 50 to 100 years ago.

The pattern is this: As the farm population shrinks, the surrounding rural towns find that there are fewer people and fewer personal consumption needs to serve. Small town businesses suffer, and towns shrink in opportunity and vitality.

As rural transportation improves, farm and rural people travel farther to buy their personal and household items, as well as their production items for the farm. Smaller towns are bypassed. Larger farms also buy on a more direct route from the manufacturer, thus leaving fewer services to be performed in local towns. Elevators, supply dealers, and others who do remain also become larger in size, leaving some of these businesses and their job opportunities to wither away.

Both farm and rural town people are pressured to migrate to cities. Some of them are the flower of the farm and rural countryside youth—vibrant, trained, capable, purposeful, filled with a dream of achievement and fired with an ambition to succeed. They are enticed by the brighter challenges in distant places. Cities, national commerce and government have gained immeasurably from the transfusion of fresh blood of country youth—youth who have been prepared and educated for life by rural people at rural expense.

But some who come to the city from the farm and countryside are less well equipped. They have been forced out and in desperation come to cities seeking anything—even welfare—magnifying the problems of compaction and poverty in the cities.

The sum total of the farm-to-city wave of economic growth has been economic progress for the Nation—but at a price; a price that in rural America sometimes demonstrates itself in declining towns, too-few challenges, deterioration and neglect.

Some rural towns are yawning shells, looking for something to happen. The commercial farm development has passed them by; urbanization and the population explosion have not yet found them.

The purpose of rural development is to help areas correct their weaknesses and to help rural people consolidate the strengths of rural living for themselves and others who might live there in the future.

By simultaneously attacking problems within the city boundaries, and beyond the city limits in the countryside, we can make faster progress toward a better life within each.

The entire Nation will gain: Our wealth is the total output of what our citizens produce for each other to use and enjoy. Therefore, our wealth as a Nation is the sum total of all the productive efforts of the individuals within the Nation. Anything, therefore, that increases the production and opportunity of even one individual makes its contribution to the wealth of all. And anything that increases the productivity of a large group of people, such as the 65 million living in countryside

America, makes a valuable contribution to the wealth of all people, including the 140 million who live in urban America.

That is why, while this report will focus on the "rural" aspects of America, it will be done with future urbanization in mind—thus this report is of equal importance to urban people and their future concerns.

Rural America and metropolitan America are in a partnership together. What helps one also helps the other.

What Is Rural Development?

Rural development has many sides, but its main goal is to bring jobs, opportunity, and a better life to low income, underemployed people in rural America, not only for their own good, but for the welfare of all Americans. At the same time, this strengthens the economic foundation of successful enterprises already established in rural areas.

In the quest for a better life for rural dwellers, the aim is to develop the type of rural society that will be capable of continuous renewal; one that will develop to the fullest its human resources; one that will remove obstacles to human fulfillment and self discovery; and one which will permit each individual the fulfillment that comes with the exercise of his talent.

Obstacles based on race, creed, color or origin will also have to be eliminated if we want to bring a better quality of life to rural America and preserve the kind of nation we care about.

A strong rural development program will help all people and the entire community and the quality of life enjoyed by all citizens.

Rural development is concerned with improving the economic capability of individuals in rural nonmetropolitan America. It is concerned with improving the services of rural communities. It is concerned with improving the economic opportunities in the small cities, towns, villages and farming communities of rural America.

People can provide much of this for themselves; some they can do together; some must come from outside sources.

The most effective program to deal with rural underemployment and lagging incomes is to create job opportunities through private enterprise, accompanied with education and job training to better fit rural people for these jobs—plus one more ingredient: bringing the jobs and jobseekers together.

We should keep in the forefront of our thinking that jobs are created by the ingenuity and ambition of private enterprise. Wealth is created by job-holding citizens and self-employed persons producing goods and services. Job development through private industry is the most effective rural development program. And the activities of rural development should be directed toward this goal.

The real strength of rural development is that it harnesses local energies and is run by local people who know better than anyone their own problems, their own capabilities and their own priorities.

Local rural development is a dedication of the strengths of individuals through their own institutions—schools, churches, clubs and organizations, business and industry—to make more jobs, create more opportunities and establish a better quality of life.

Rural development as a communitywide action program cannot start unless the local people want it, and it cannot succeed unless local leaders aggressively promote it. If a community lacks leadership, if it lacks local concern, if it isn't convinced that it should become a better place to live—then perhaps it shouldn't. But sometimes rural development comes to just such a community through the evangelical crusade of one person to get the community to raise its sights and fire its ambition.

Communities take on the characteristics of the people in them, reflecting their drive, ambition, pride, resourcefulness and will to work together. Vibrant, progressive communities don't just happen, nor are they beyond the reach of any of us.

We can't guarantee prosperity for each community that starts a rural development program—but we can guarantee this: Any community will be better as a result of its effort.

The proper role of State and Federal Government in rural development is to help local areas with their planning, to share ideas and to provide the means by which local communities can tap whatever assistance State and Federal Government offers to individuals and to local projects.

Rural development does not "give" people anything except the encouragement and tools to work together and the promise that their effort will be rewarded.

Rural development is not:

- A new agency of government.
- A new appropriation to spend money in rural America.
- A new set of directives from the Federal Government.
- A program handed down and run from above.

Rural development is, however, many things:

1. Rural development is aimed at those with low incomes and the underemployed, but it is not just a poverty program—however, dealing with poverty is a No. 1 challenge.
2. Rural development is a "people" program to lift up those in greatest need, whether disadvantaged for economic or social reasons—but it is not a civil rights program or a rural slum program. However, by creating greater opportunity for all, those who will be helped the most are those who have been the most disadvantaged.

3. Rural development is aimed at job creation, but it is not just an industrialization program—although jobs through private enterprise is the key to long-lasting economic opportunity.
4. It is aimed at improving rural America, but it is not just a farm or rural program that benefits only those in the rural countryside—although this is where the work will be done.
5. Rural development is built on local initiative, but it does not depend solely on local resources and local leadership—nevertheless, local initiative is the key to the success of rural development.
6. Rural development is aimed at a better quality of life, but rural development is not just a social program—even though quality of life and a better society is the end product of rural development.
7. Rural development is aimed at population and industrial dispersion, but it is not just a land policy or settlement program—however, physical surroundings and environmental development are vital for clean air, clear water, open space, scenic beauty, recreation and "room to live."

Rural development, then, is a combination of specific programs directed toward a broad horizon—all intended to help create a nation of greater beauty, deeper satisfactions and expanded opportunities for all Americans, now and in the future, both in urban and rural areas.

Rural development will build a new rural countryside America; and by building a new and better rural America we will build better cities and a better America—a new life for the country. This report from the Task Force on Rural Development will tell how.

CHAPTER II

How to Make Rural Development Work

The Council for Rural Affairs—Chaired by the President and Represented by Appropriate Presidential Cabinet Members—Should Be Maintained as an Effective Body That Gives High Priority to Rural Development

In order to attain effective rural development—and make more progress than in the past—we must create the right machinery that will enable us to do the job.

The establishment of the Council for Rural Affairs on November 13, 1969 by Executive Order 11493 is a giant step for the future development of the Nation. It should greatly accelerate the progress in rural development by harnessing the full force of Government and private initiative through greater cooperation between and within departments of the Federal Government * * * between the Federal Government and State governments * * * between local towns and communities and their State and Federal Governments * * * and among governments, industry, businesses, and individuals.

The Council for Rural Affairs should set an example of interdepartmental cooperation, and it should declare forcefully and clearly that this spirit of cooperation is to prevail throughout all levels of the Federal Government. Lack of interdepartmental cooperation—and lack of commitment to rural development by all departments—has been a serious handicap in the past.

The first function of the Council for Rural Affairs should be to establish appropriate goals, policies, and priorities for the economic and social development of rural countryside America—which includes the nonmetropolitan portions of the Nation where 65 million people reside in small cities, towns, villages and on farms in the 2,600 counties that are classified as nonmetropolitan.

Some urgent goals, policies and priorities are being suggested in this report for consideration by the Council for Rural Affairs.

The Council for Rural Affairs should have a vigorous full-time staff director who has the authority and the responsibility to see that the goals, policies and priorities of the Council for Rural Affairs are carried into action throughout all levels of the Federal Government.

The real worth of the Council for Rural Affairs will be determined by "what gets done" between meetings of the Council.

It is characteristic of Federal Government machinery to move slowly—and sometimes not at all—unless aided by an operating executive who "greases the machinery" and keeps it running. A full-time Staff Director of rural development—armed with the appropriate authority is necessary for the fulfillment of that purpose.

Each Cabinet-level department should designate an Assistant Secretary to serve as rural development coordinator to work with the Council for Rural Affairs Staff Director. Each rural development coordinator should cooperate in seeing that the programs of his department are implemented and given high priority within the goals, policies and priorities established by the Council for Rural Affairs.

The Task Force on Rural Development recommends that the President and the Congress establish a permanent Commission on Rural Development with the responsibility to monitor rural development activity and report annually to the President and to the Congress with an evaluation of the effectiveness of rural development programs and with recommendations for improvements.

Rural development will benefit from an annual review by a Commission which includes citizens who are not connected with the Government or with the agencies involved in rural development. This Commission can provide an "outside" appraisal of the progress being made—and contribute its recommendations for improvement.

We suggest that the Commission consist of 18 citizens—10 private citizens to be appointed by the President with balanced political representation; and four to be appointed by each the House and the Senate, with no more than two appointed by each House to be from one political party.

We urge that the Council for Rural Affairs put concerted effort into rural development to give it the sense of urgency which the times demand.

We have been involved in rural development for 15 years and have dealt with it in modest terms. This was not time wasted; we have learned many things. But the problems are now too urgent, and the time too short, to continue at the same pace as in the past. We must break out of the pace at which we have been moving and move with a new sense of national commitment.

We urge that the Council for Rural Affairs establish expanded goals of achievement by which present effort and future progress in rural development can be judged.

CHAPTER III

National Policies for Growth

The Executive Branch of the Federal Government Should Take the Leadership in Establishing, With the Full Cooperation of Congress, a Set of Modernized National Policies To Help Guide the Future Economic and Social Development of the Nation

Rural development will take place within the framework of the total economic and social development of the Nation. Rural development is not a thing apart.

The Nation needs to develop guiding policies in such areas as population distribution, industrial dispersion, land use, resource management, food and fiber production, adequate rural housing, relevant educational programs, full employment, national growth, and quality of life. These national policies, which should be developed following a full discourse with the private sector, will all directly benefit rural development.

The policies developed by Congress and the executive branch should be directed with appropriate Executive orders and legislative declarations, and should be widely promoted for public discussion and greater understanding.

Continuing development of Government programs and activity of governments at all levels should be expedited against the backdrop of these national policies.

The Task Force on Rural Development recommends that high priority be given to a national policy on the geographic distribution of population and economic growth.

A more widely dispersed population in the future promises the soundest, most economical and longest-lasting solution to the problems of city compaction, such as traffic congestion, pollution, slums, crime, and civil defense. At the same time, a broader distribution of population will benefit people in small cities, towns, villages and on farms.

It is important that population distribution be considered in locating future Federal and State government offices and installations.

We recommend that the newly-established National Goals Research Staff turn its attention immediately to rural development and suggest that it have a professional staff member who is well-versed in rural affairs.

We have reached a state of development in the Nation where all actions—public and private—often have a substantial impact on others. It is becoming increasingly difficult, and much more costly, to correct the consequence of unenlightened "drift" in economic and social development.

Every town and community, every school district, every county, every State—and the Nation itself—exhibit examples of inadequate public and private planning where similar development within the guiding framework of longer-range goals and policies would have led to a much better quality of life for everyone. Emergency or unenlightened action taken for today—both in the public and private sectors—oftentimes results in long-term undesirable economic and social consequences. Some of these consequences cannot be anticipated—but many can.

The Nation sorely needs a research group of great skill and judgment that can stand afar from today's social and economic scene, project trends into the future, and advise the Nation on the probable long-range consequences of today's actions, or lack of action, and thereby gently assist us all in contemplating the shape of the future.

A long-range planning council, such as the National Goals Research Staff, can help set the tone for the 21st century. As it studies and publishes on future development, it should consult with and enlist the resources and cooperation of congressional committees, executive departments, universities, foundations, businesses, associations, individuals, and State and local governments. It should have no authority other than to study, anticipate consequences of present trends, evaluate alternatives and publish. It should focus on a period of 5 to 50 years ahead.

This long-range planning group should not be burdened to take positions on pressing current problems and controversy, which are often emotional or political in nature. That can be handled better by executive departments and congressional committees. But the Congress, the executive branch, State and local governments, business and industry, and the Nation's people should all have the advantage of the far-sighted, long-range studies that such a planning council can provide.

However, planning and research should be kept in perspective—maximum freedom should be preserved for individuals, private industry, and local governments in the continuing development of the Nation. They know best at their levels both the problems and the opportunities surrounding them and are better equipped to react positively to them and handle them constructively. What they need is more and better long-range information.

The Task Force on Rural Development urges simultaneously more adequate State and local planning and zoning so that "responsive development" can replace undesirable "economic and social drift" across the land.

CHAPTER IV

Streamlining Federal Programs

The Council for Rural Affairs Should Immediately Have Steps Taken To Codify Existing Statutes and Evaluate the Myriad of Present Federal Programs That Can Apply to Rural Development. These Should Then Be Consolidated, Simplified and Streamlined. Internal Evaluation Should Be Built Into New and Revised Programs

One of the first tasks for the Council for Rural Affairs should be to arrange, in cooperation with the legal staff of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other concerned agencies, a written codification of the statutory materials which currently apply to rural development programs. In addition, appropriate explanatory material concerning these programs should be prepared.

The Task Force on Rural Development finds no shortage of Federal programs—but we do find problems of availability to users. Federal programs must be made more effective.

The number of programs is no measure of total effort; in some respects, proliferation of programs is an indication of ineffectiveness.

There are already so many different Federal programs that can apply to rural America that even well-versed employees of Cabinet departments could not adequately describe them for the Task Force, tell just how they apply to rural America, or suggest how local communities can satisfactorily "wire into them."

The task force was stymied in carrying out the first of its charges from the President—namely, to evaluate how present programs are working. Time did not permit a program-by-program review—though it badly needs to be done. In the short life that this Task Force has had, we can merely conclude that the total effect of all the programs is inadequate and that the persent machinery was not designed for the road ahead.

We recommend consolidation and simplification of programs.

The present programs should be reappraised not from the viewpoint of how they best serve a department's machinery, but how they can be made to serve better the people on farms and in the towns of rural

America to meet tomorrow's problems—and to carry out national policies and goals for population dispersal and economic development.

Present programs are not encouraging sufficient private investment or private initiative in rebuilding our countryside America—nor are they effectively meeting the immediate human needs of low-income and disadvantaged families.

The Task Force recommends that new and revised programs should be designed to preserve and strengthen our decentralized system of government; make maximum use of private enterprise; and aim to solve problems rather than perpetually treat the symptoms.

New and revised programs should be built on a program-oriented framework that focuses on major public problems rather than on the organization of the agency doing the work.

Emerging problems in rural communities center around such things as industrial development, zoning, recreation, open space, job training, housing, water and sewers, environmental pollution, school consolidation, health care, adequate churches and social institutions, family welfare and malnutrition. We simply aren't yet organized to deal with these as effectively as we can deal with such things as farm production, forest lands, highways, flood control and snow removal.

Modern systems analysis and management techniques should be used to determine the costs and effectiveness of new and revised programs. Programs should be planned and budget provisions be made to fund them over several years rather than 1 year at a time. Internal information systems should be strengthened to provide better data for decisionmaking and to make it easier for the government and the public to evaluate results.

Congress can help by providing needed legislative changes and by consolidating appropriations. The executive branch—particularly the Budget Bureau—can also help by insisting upon both joint funding and coordinated planning throughout the Federal Government.

We recognize that the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be given substantial responsibility to carry out coordinating, research, educational and processing functions in rural development. This is well advised.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, with its vast experience, established relationships, and existing administrative machinery should be used in rural development when this can avoid unnecessary duplication of effort, offices and people in other departments; when this can help focus the full force of Federal effort into assisting local action; and when this can simplify and reduce the Federal appendages of government with which local people work.

The Task Force recommends that major emphasis should be placed on cooperation among and within all executive departments to get full use of the resources, energies and commitment of each department to rural development. Various departments and agencies can be designated with primary responsibilities in different subject matter areas.

A close spirit of cooperation should start with the Council for Rural Affairs and extend through the most remote operating agencies of the Federal Government. We advise the Council for Rural Affairs not to diffuse authority so broadly among departments that little gets done; nor to concentrate responsibility so centrally in one department that it stifles enthusiasm in the others. This is a "tight rope" where only sound judgment and continual monitoring can successfully provide a "moving balance." This has been a major problem in the past—but it is not an excuse for failure in the future.

The Council for Rural Affairs should proceed early to take positive steps which will demonstrate this principle of close cooperation.

CHAPTER V

Strengthening State and Local Participation

The Task Force on Rural Development Asks the President to Call for Closer Partnership Between Local-State-Federal Governments and Private Industry, Urging Them to Marshal Their Resources to Mutually Attack Problems of Rural Economic and Social Development in the 1970's

Rural development is a job for all the Nation—both public and private sectors—working together in partnership.

Each State government should be encouraged to establish a top-level rural development council in the State executive branch; name a State coordinator of rural development; and designate a department, agency or organization within the State to have primary responsibility for coordinating State governmental activity for rural development in the State.

Federal and State agencies involved in rural development within a State should each designate one full-time individual who shall serve as a member of the State Rural Development Coordinating Committee, chaired by the State coordinator. A representative of appropriate private enterprise associations, departments of State governments, and local rural development organizations should serve on the coordinating committee.

We recommend that rural development efforts be organized around present or potential "growth centers" and that rural development committees be organized on county, multicounty, and regional bases.

Organizations for rural development should include such groups as chambers of commerce, business and trade associations, industrial development corporations, farm organizations, labor organizations, local representatives of Federal and State agencies involved in rural development, professional societies, service clubs, banking and financial institutions, electric and other utilities, church councils, educational councils and others.

These rural development organizations can coordinate and intensify developmental efforts, provide synergism, inventory local resources, provide professional staffing, qualify to receive moneys and grants, do planning, and guide local rural development projects that often cut across local political boundaries of the more than 80,000 units of local government.

We recommend that greater use be made of funds for comprehensive local planning in nonmetropolitan districts, as provided by the 1968 amendment to section 701 of the Housing Act.

The Task Force firmly believes that planning for community needs should be the responsibility of enlightened and concerned local people—and in order to carry this out more successfully we call for a revitalization of State and local government during the 1970's.

We encourage continuing modernization of State and local governments with emphasis on strengthening State legislatures and, where practical, consolidating local government facilities and services.

The complexity of jurisdictions of townships, county, municipal and statutory authorities is constantly a challenge in efficient public administration. Economic and social problems, and opportunities, often overlay local governmental boundaries that were built for the early to mid-1800's—and we will soon be living in the 21st century. It is encouraging to see the administrative changes in education, regional medical services, economic development, and water resource management in watersheds and river basins. More progress is needed in efficient local administration and use of public funds.

The antidote to "big government" is more effective State and local government. We recommend a national campaign to involve people in their local government. There are two ways to run local government—with a closed door as a fraternity of "in people"—or with an open door where organized, conscious efforts are made to involve a wide range of local talent and participation in governmental affairs. To this end we urge increased effort by political parties, business and professional organizations, service clubs, farm organizations, labor organizations and others to involve local citizens through a "Government by the People" program which will strengthen local government in the 1970's.

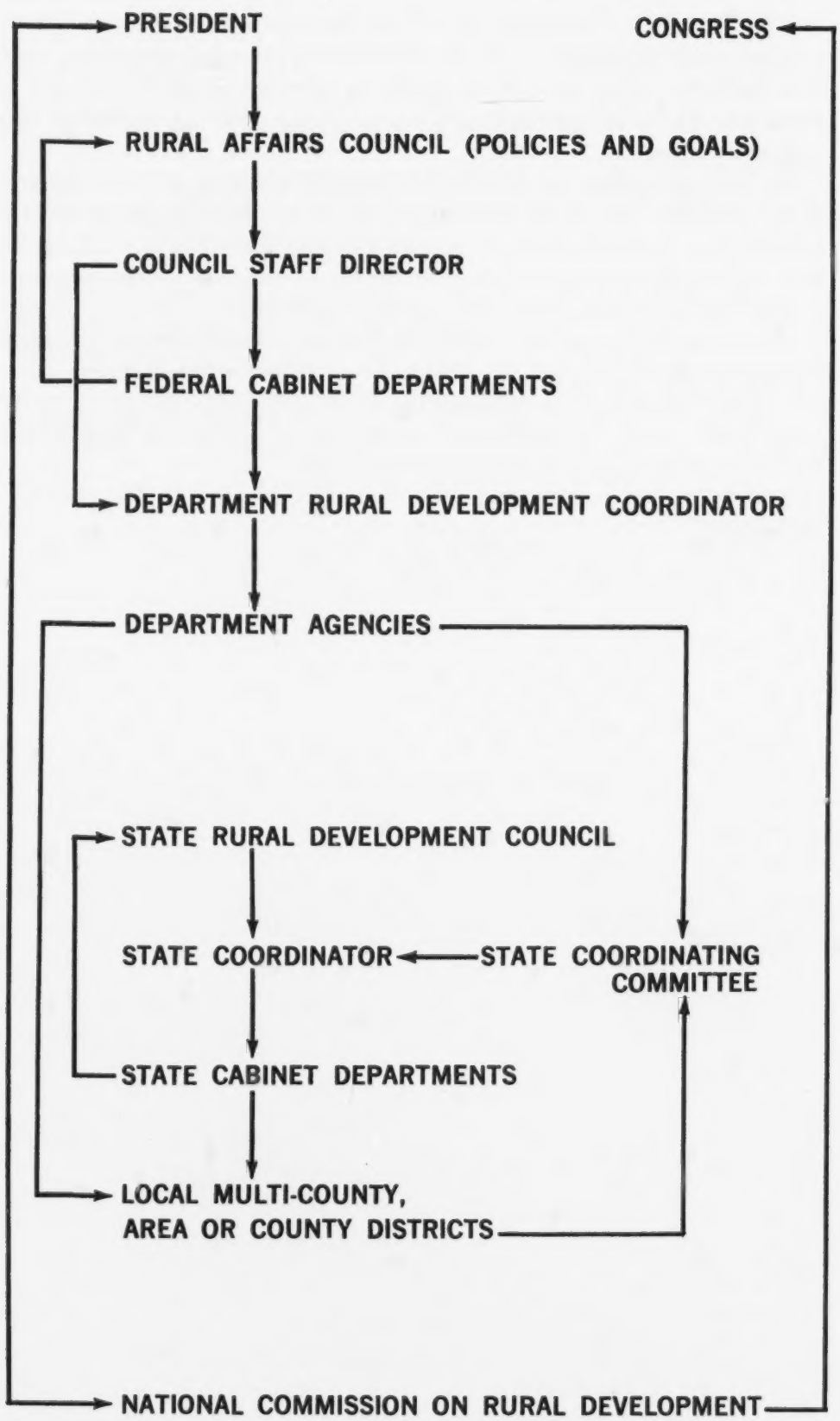
The Task Force recommends the simplification and streamlining of procedures for applying for rural development assistance. Catalogs of available rural development assistance programs should be maintained so that the designated local offices can give intelligent guidance to inquiries. There should be one place in each development area where preliminary applications can be made for State and Federal development assistance.

The Task Force finds that one of the most frustrating obstructions to greater rural development is the complex application procedure that is a built-in barrier facing the group or person for whom the aid is intended. These complicated procedures delay program initiation and implementation.

Government offices of the various agencies are often widely scattered geographically. When a local group or person does find the proper agency by design or by chance, he frequently discovers that the office is manned by a mere mortal who cannot fathom the intricacies of available programs or discover the proper method for tapping the stream.

We suggest that one local office, staffed by a trained person, properly equipped with the simplified catalogs of rural development assistance—and aided by popularized pamphlets built around specific local problems—serve as an "ombudsman" to assist local groups and individuals in "wiring into" whatever assistance is available.

The following diagram helps illustrate how these suggestions would tie together.


PRESIDENT
CONGRESS
RURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL (POLICIES AND GOALS)
COUNCIL STAFF DIRECTOR
FEDERAL CABINET DEPARTMENTS
DEPARTMENT RURAL DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
DEPARTMENT AGENCIES
STATE RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
STATE COORDINATOR
STATE COORDINATING COMMITTEE
STATE CABINET DEPARTMENTS
LOCAL MULTI-COUNTY, AREA OR COUNTY DISTRICTS
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER VI

Building Rural America Through Private Enterprise

Private Industry Should Launch a New, National Effort To Help Develop the Rural Countryside in Response to, and in Cooperation With, Local Communities Exercising Their Own Initiative

Rural development is concerned with improving the society. Successful rural development involves the blending together in an harmonious relationship the roles of people as citizens of the Republic, owners of resources, operators of businesses and workers. Governments, businesses, and the people must take actions that are mutually consistent to bring about the desirable growth and development of rural America.

Job creation is at the heart of rural development. American people are work oriented. They want jobs that will enable them to earn incomes sufficient to support a reasonable level of living. When people have good jobs they have the money to provide for their families and the enthusiasm to build and improve the community where they live. They also have a tax base with which to provide public services.

Rural development in the 1970's is a challenge for private industry and private initiative.

The purpose of local rural development is not to "steal jobs" from other areas—but to develop new jobs in countryside America, especially to provide the living space and the accompanying industries needed to support a substantial portion of the 100 million additional people who probably will be added to our population in the next 30 years. This requires space for more than 3 million new people each year.

Today 65 million Americans live in rural America. Millions more will reside there by the year 2000. Many of these are now unemployed or underemployed. Most desire to become more fully and gainfully employed. Nearly all desire to improve their level of living. Private industry's greatest challenge in the 1970's will be to achieve these goals and

help fulfill personal wants. Likewise, this could become private industry's crowning, and most important, achievement as the nation prepares to enter its third century.

Equally important with accommodating the coming 100 million people, we need to attack the present vast underemployment of both the people and the physical resources already in countryside America. They can be organized into productive effort that will create jobs for the underemployed and wealth for us all. We are far from having all our national wants fulfilled. Harnessing these rural resources and underemployed people into wealth-creating work is a job for private enterprise now and through the 1970's.

The Task Force recommends that the Nation's industries launch a campaign to establish jobs and new plant locations in countryside America. This can aid materially in lessening the pollution and transportation problems in congested industrial areas. It will also help disperse the population.

Accelerated tax depreciation or investment tax credit for companies located in designated rural development areas should be explored.

The responsibility for financing rural development will be especially burdensome on the private sector—and nothing can be accomplished unless government maintains and fosters a business climate that permits the formation of investment capital.

Industries that "pioneer" in countryside areas should be encouraged and compensated for their efforts to develop new job opportunities in areas where initial community services and trained labor forces may not be as plentiful nor as complete as in urban areas.

Graduated corporation taxes, and other tax incentives, for corporations and companies investing in rural development areas should be reviewed to see how to encourage investment by private enterprise. When new industries—or industries locating in new areas—are given tax incentives, there should be both a time and a size limitation on such tax benefits.

We recommend that local communities develop zoning guidelines for future growth and development, including plans for adequate open space and recreation. Communities should think of what they want to look like if they grow.

We recommend that communities inventory the capabilities of local people and local resources, study what is happening in their areas, and lay out a program to stimulate local production and development. This self-analysis will provide the best clues to local opportunities. It should be based upon the broad participation of all groups, including the poor and minority groups.

We recommend that private industry take on increased responsibili-

ties in the job of training and retraining people in rural areas to develop their trade skills and ability to hold more productive employment.

Private industry has an opportunity and a responsibility in education for rural America. Private industry should look upon the great reservoir of underemployed rural people as an opportunity for employment of an eager labor force—and as part of private industry's long-term responsibility toward industrial dispersion, pollution control and providing more equal job opportunity for underprivileged job seekers.

The rural underemployed of this Nation provide a great untapped source of potential wealth that can be freed to produce goods and services for the Nation—and at the same time raise themselves several rungs on the economic ladder.

We urge private enterprise groups to organize management assistance for small business enterprises in countryside rural America.

This might take various forms, such as an executive volunteer corps built largely around retired executives. Or companies might offer employees "release time" to work on volunteer projects in rural development. Or a company might hire an expert who spends his time helping rural development efforts.

We urge that communities which are too small to manage a worthwhile rural development program themselves, unite with other communities, towns and counties to pool their strengths into viable economic growth centers.

Many communities are too small to provide desirable public services.

We urge business organizations, professional associations, farm organizations, service clubs and others to appoint joint working committees to bridge the communication gap between towns and farms.

The first requisite of local planning for rural development is communication between interested groups to show their interdependence and excite enough interest to "pull together."

Living in the space age where communications can be instantaneous, we find that there exists a great communication gap in rural America. It is more expedient, but probably less permanently productive, to communicate and seek help from State and Federal departments of government than it is to communicate and seek solutions through people, organizations, and communities working with their neighbors next door.

We recommend a special effort by banks, financial institutions and the Small Business Administration to lend money and provide management aids for small businesses in countryside America.

It is often easier to lend money in larger amounts—and in larger cities—but when this happens, it drains away opportunities in smaller towns and communities and handicaps smaller businesses.

We urge the housing industry to develop special programs to provide better adapted, more economical housing for rural areas.

CHAPTER VII

Financing Rural Development

Developing Rural America Will Take Large Amounts of Money, Now and Later—This Money Will Come From Individuals, Either Investing in Rural America Freely Through Private Enterprise or Through Government in the Form of Taxes, There is No Other Way—We Recommend, First, the Following Policies To Guide the Investment in Rural Development; and Second, the Following Action:

Financial Policies

National policies that lead to full employment, fiscal soundness and control of inflation are essential for an expanding economy and vigorous rural growth.

A prosperous, independent commercial agriculture is necessary for a sound, vigorous rural economy.

Priority should be given to expenditures of money in rural development that will be job-creating and income-producing.

Private capital investment for rural development, where appropriate, is preferable to investment of government tax funds.

Government guarantees of loans are preferable to direct government loans or grants.

Government loans or grants for rural development that are based on a substantial local commitment of funds—within the ability of the local area—assure better local financial management, and buy more for the money, than when loans and grants are made in full.

Tax credits, revenue sharing and block grants to states with appropriate accountability are preferable to grants-in-aid which involve complicating application procedures, overlapping Federal regulations and control.

Reasonable government aid to nonmetropolitan communities and rural people is justified on the basis that nonmetropolitan America has one-third of the Nation's people but has one-half of the Nation's poverty and 60 percent of the poor housing. It educates 36 percent of the Na-

tion's young people though it has only 25 percent of the Nation's income.

Investment of State and Federal funds in rural development should take into consideration greatest need and be in response to local interest.

Present available funds and authorizations should be examined before requesting new funds.

Care should be taken to avoid programs that are politically motivated, stifle local initiative, waste money and undermine confidence.

Financial Action

The Task Force recommends a new credit institution to provide rural areas with greater access to private capital. This institution—to be named the Rural Development Credit Bank—should be structured in law as a wholly new title in an amendment to the Farm Credit Act.

The Farm Credit Act, passed more than 50 years ago, established the Farm Credit System, whereby the System sells its bonds and debentures (not guaranteed by the Federal Government) in the private money markets to raise capital for loans to farmers. The System was started with a modest amount of government "seed money" which has been repaid and the System is now completely owned by the users.

We suggest a similar self-liquidating arrangement, within the Farm Credit System, but completely apart from farm loans, to provide private capital for such uses as rural housing, water and sewer systems, water resource projects, rural industries, recreational facilities, and rural utilities including rural electric and telephone systems. Loans should be made to private individuals, cooperatives, corporations, municipalities or other appropriate public authorities established under State law.

The capital needs for this investment are too great in total, and too large in individual amounts, to be met in full by existing local banking and financial institutions.

The Task Force recommends that all States who have not done so should enact enabling legislation to grant authority for establishing local, county, multicounty or regional development corporations empowered to accept loans or grants from private or public funds and to create development funds from the sale of properly issued securities.

Many States have done this. Others should.

The Task Force recommends that the Farmers Home Administration in the U.S. Department of Agriculture be renamed appropriately to reflect its broader commitment to the financial needs of rural communities.

We suggest that all Federal agency programs be reviewed to see what loans, grants, loan guarantees and other forms of Federal financial assistance for rural development might appropriately be consolidated with present Farmers Home Administration programs and incorporated into

the newly revised agency. This should in no way detract from the traditional supervised loans for farmers and ranchers. This new agency should concentrate on financial needs and seek out opportunities that are not met by traditional private financial institutions and the proposed Rural Development Credit Bank within the Farm Credit System.

We recommend that government programs for farm commodities and commercial farms be separated in title, philosophy and procedures from rural development programs for people, communities and small farms.

The problems of small noncommercial farmers should be met with special programs designed to help "people." Some can be helped to become bigger, more successful farmers. Those small, noncommercial farmers who want to be trained for other work—including employment in agribusiness—could be helped with a transitional program that retires their allotments and cropping rights, pays a modest sum for retraining, provides temporary financial assistance while transferring to other work, and furnishes loans to get reestablished outside of farming.

Rural development of the kind and magnitude envisioned by the task force will help these people find jobs and opportunities in countryside America. Already off-farm income of farm people has reached $15 billion a year—equivalent to 27½ percent of the gross income from farm sources. Off-farm income per farm has doubled in the last 8 years. This has been—and will continue to be—an invaluable aid in helping rural people adjust to changes. Off-farm income was greater than gross cash receipts from farming for about 1.4 million farms in 1968.

More than half the people who live on farms also work off the farm—and about half those working on farms also live off the farm.

Larger commercial farmers will also benefit from rural development. Community services will be upgraded, and the quality of living in rural communities will be improved.

CHAPTER VIII

Education for Success

The Nation Will Benefit if Education and Opportunity for Education Are Expanded in Rural Areas—Steps Should Be Taken To Increase Educational Quality, Quantity, Variety and Equality in Rural America

Education harnesses the skills, resources and the time of people to useful modern tasks which add to the wealth that is shared by all of society.

Estimates in 1960 placed underemployment in the Nation at 8.4 percent for rural nonfarm and at 26.0 percent for rural farm forces. This is equivalent to 1.5 million man-years annually that are not fully employed in producing wealth for the Nation to share. This is a wasteful loss—first to the underemployed who are not compensated for idle skills, and second, to each of us in society who cannot benefit from wealth that is not produced. Simply put, you cannot cut up a pie that hasn't been baked. Thus we each have an economic interest in the education of other people wherever they are and whomever they are, regardless of race, class or place of residence.

Education molds people into active, participating members of our civilized social order. We each gain from the quality and equality of education for all, for it helps others join to construct a healthy society where men can live in harmony with one another, with sights uplifted.

We are a migratory population—especially in rural America where we have had a net outmigration of 25 million people since World War II. This is one of the largest migrations of people in recorded history. The person who will work next to you or live next to you tomorrow may today be living several miles to even thousands of miles away.

These add up to compelling reasons why we each have a personal stake in good education for people everywhere—and why we should rectify the shortage and quality of education in rural America.

Since education through the secondary and vocational school levels is primarily a public responsibility, the Task Force urges greater use of State

aid to upgrade salaries and instructional facilities in financially deficient rural America—while at the same time preserving the principle of locally controlled public schools answerable to elected local school boards.

Educational programs should be developed to assure people living in the small cities, towns and on the farms of rural America with educational opportunities—including preschool, general education and vocational and occupational education that are comparable in quality and quantity to those provided others in our society.

There is an urgent need for work experience programs, subprofessional job training, adult education, broad vocational and technical training, retraining, testing, occupational counseling, community colleges and areawide special education, especially at an early age, for educationally underprivileged rural residents.

Rural youth, particularly, are faced with the prospect of migration. To meet the needs of contemporary society, they need both a higher quality of general education and a wider offering of vocational education and technical education. The latter can be helped by more multidistrict area vocational and technical schools and by amending the Vocational Education Act to provide that Federal funds for vocational education be granted in lump sums to States, leaving it up to States and local school districts to allocate the funds among different types of vocational education.

States should be encouraged to take more initiative in developing advisory committees to give direction to locally adapted manpower development programs.

The State departments of education should establish in multidistrict area vocational schools, programs of testing, occupational counseling, vocational and technical training; and in cooperation with the State employment services assist in job placement.

In government-aided manpower training, the Task Force on Rural Development recommends that cost-per-person as the yardstick for establishing training, should be minimized in rural areas.

The cost-per-person yardstick discriminates against sparsely settled rural areas in contrast with urban areas. It further aggravates a disparity that already exists because of fewer alternative sources of job training provided by industry in rural areas.

The Task Force recommends that, whenever practical, government-aided manpower training be provided through incentives for on-job training in private industry.

This can take the form of direct government reimbursement of employer training costs or tax credits against Federal income tax liabilities. These incentives should be directed at hiring and training both the unemployed and underemployed in nonmetropolitan countryside areas. A pilot program should be established in rural areas similar to the one

scheduled to commence in cities in January 1970, as planned by the Inter-agency Advisory Committee on Tax Credits.

We believe that there is merit in training and retraining adults in an environment similar to that in which they will be employed upon completion of their on-the-job training. Managerial, supervisory and operating personnel can serve as instructors. All trainees should be certified to their State employment service when their on-the-job training is completed.

The Task Force recommends that Land-Grant colleges and universities step up their commitment to direct more of their efforts toward the needs of countryside communities and rural people with special emphasis on meeting the informational and educational needs of low-income groups.

Additional resource personnel for rural development should be funded for work at county, area and State levels in the Extension Service.

Land-Grant colleges and universities should be more adequately funded through the Cooperative State Research Service for research relevant to the needs of rural development and with special emphasis on research which will be immediately helpful to low-income groups—with emphasis on low-cost housing and home furnishings, pooling of buying and selling functions for small farmers and small businessmen, cooperatives and a continued effort to ascertain the status and progress of low-income families. Some Land-Grant colleges and universities will no doubt wish to establish departments of rural development so as to place visible emphasis on the rural development effort of the institution.

It follows that education is no better than the facts upon which it is based. Therefore, the research programs of the agricultural experiment stations must be given equal billing with the efforts of the Cooperative Extension Services in the States if maximum rural development progress is to be achieved.

We commend the 4-H programs and Future Farmers of America Programs for their emphasis on private initiative through productive individual projects and urge that these programs be intensified and expanded to encompass so far as possible all rural youth with particular emphasis on reaching youth in low-income families.

4–H and FFA programs have provided valuable leadership training for young people; they fill a need for organized purposeful club activity during critical teenage years; and they provide incentive to keep rural boys and girls in school. The manpower available to the Cooperative Extension Services in the States has not been sufficient to expand 4–H club activities in keeping with either the needs or the potential benefit of particularly the 4–H club activities. We would, therefore, urge that funds be provided to add additional 4–H agents in those nonmetropolitan counties where rural poverty is greatest and where the most intensive

effort will be required if our next generation of rural girls and boys is to be brought into the mainstream of American life.

We recommend that club activities similar to 4–H and FFA be organized around business and technical training in secondary schools throughout rural areas.

Efforts should be made to make greater use of existing educational facilities in all school districts—particularly for adult evening schools, nutritional training, industrial-skill training, and school program enrichment for interested children.

CHAPTER IX

Nutrition and Welfare

We Recommend Emergency Measures To Provide a Reasonable Level of Nutrition and Income for the Poor and the Handicapped in Rural Areas—This Aid Should Encourage Work, Stress Training, and Strengthen Family Relationships

The rural development that is visualized by this Task Force will do a great deal to bring jobs, income, services, health care, and educational training into countryside areas. But there are some people who have been, and will be, temporarily or permanently "left behind" in the economic and social improvement of rural areas.

A focus of the recommendations of this Task Force is to provide people who are financially, educationally, emotionally, and culturally impoverished with greater opportunities to "get aboard" through their own initiative and enterprise.

Still, we recognize that there are many who cannot—and some who will not—"get aboard." They should be offered a special friendly hand of compassionate help by the rest of society.

We are not advocating a program of perpetual welfare. Unending handouts never have, and never will, solve the problems of a society, nor of any person within a society. What we are saying, however, is that some of our rural poor need help now if they are ever going to become contributing members of society. If a man is unable to feed and care for his family, it's a sure bet that he will never become, or want to become, a full partner in organized society. His children, raised in this environment, will fare little better.

The Task Force favors food assistance in the form of food stamps, nutritional education, and school lunch programs.

Food stamps are a form of direct income assistance—since a food stamp is money scrip, the same as a dollar bill. Food stamps, however, are directed income—provided by society to the needy for the specific purpose of purchasing food as a primary basic necessity of life.

We believe that family welfare assistance should start with food stamps—with families required to pay from zero to increasing proportions

of the value of the stamps, depending upon their income. The Task Force believes that society does not want poor people to go hungry; but that society also wants to know that its aid is providing, first of all, food for the family.

It is possible to have poor nutrition—perhaps even malnutrition—though the quantity of food is adequate. For this reason, the Task Force recommends a program of nutritional education among food stamp recipients and in low-income rural areas. Also, since food stamps will bring an improved variety of foods into the poor home—contrasted with direct surplus food distribution—we think that the families receiving the stamps can further strengthen their nutrition through a broadened nutritional education program.

Nutrition plays a vital role in the physical and mental development of the young, especially at preschool and school ages. School lunch programs should be offered nationwide and be available to the destitute without cost or embarrassment to the children. Preschool nutrition should be stressed in nutritional education.

Primary responsibility for nutritional education should rest with the Extension Service and young adult education associated with vocational education home economics programs in high schools.

The Task Force favors supplemental direct income family assistance.

Economically deprived families have additional basic needs beyond food—such as health care, clothing requirements and housing. We believe that these can best be provided through direct income assistance. This income should be reasonable, both as a minimum to take care of the family needs and as a maximum beyond which the burden on the employed in society becomes too great.

The Task Force on Rural Development suggests that those people who require family assistance should be classified into two groups—those requiring temporary assistance and those requiring permanent assistance.

Some people who are physically or mentally handicapped—or who are too old or "untrainable"—will require permanent assistance. Others need only temporary assistance and special programs to help them get into the full stream of economic and social life.

The American people are filled with compassion for those who cannot work or who cannot perform up to normal standards. They also recognize that some who can work, don't. To protect the welfare assistance of those who are deserving, and to prevent any stigma from being directed at the deserving, safeguards should be built into assistance programs to sort out the few who do not merit the people's compassion.

Family welfare assistance should provide incentives for full family life.

The basic structure of society is the family. The greatest goal of our

economic and social life is to provide opportunities for sound family life with the training, values and joys that family life imparts.

Family assistance programs should be aimed to carry out this goal. Payments should not penalize those who work—but should encourage work by heads of households. Families whose members can, and do, work should have better incomes than those who don't.

CHAPTER X

Housing and Health

The Task Force Points Out That Housing and Health Care Are Generally Deficient in Rural Areas. Upgraded Housing and Health Care Are Needed Urgently—Not Only Will This Benefit Individuals, But It Is a First Step in Increasing the Economic Potential of an Area

Two of the first measures of the quality of life are the health of the body in which we live and the comfort of the housing where we dwell. Both of these are generally below par for rural people. Of the 5.8 million substandard houses in America, 3.6 million are located in rural America.

Strengthening the availability of health care and upgrading housing should be two of the first projects in a rural development area. This is cooperative endeavor between what people can do for themselves and what they can do together in public projects.

Healthy people, with access to adequate care, have more vigor, lose less time from work, earn more income and get more out of life. Thus adequate money spent on health care—particularly preventive care—"comes back" to the individual and to the community.

Housing is one of the first external signs of the pride and vigor of a community. Well-kept, comfortable and attractive housing binds people to an area, invites development, encourages the young, and "picks up" the spirit of the community. Money spent on housing also "comes back" and adds immeasurably to the quality of living of a neighborhood.

The Task Force recommends that all rural development programs should assign high priorities to housing and health services.

All the things that we have talked about in this report are important and interrelated. To leave any out is like building a barrel and leaving out a stave. But we single out these two—housing and health services—as having top priority for what individuals and the community can do together now, in the spirit of rural development initiative, and which will give immediate, lasting, and valuable benefits.

Therefore, we suggest that rural development efforts, from the Council for Rural Affairs down to the smallest volunteer local group, stress housing and health care.

Federal and State assistance for housing should be in proportion to need—and opportunity.

Decent housing, privately owned, adds to the quality of life and family stability, and will encourage people to stay in rural America. In the future, people increasingly will live in areas created for living and work in areas designed for manufacturing and service industries. This creates a potential for new kinds of living in countryside areas.

We recommend that limitations within existing legislation and administrative regulations related to financing of rural housing be removed or modified so as to take into account the special problems of rural housing.

A special problem in rural areas is that typical private housing development projects are not attractive from an investment standpoint in more sparsely settled areas. As a result, the housing industry is not putting comparable effort into low-cost construction and packaged financing in rural areas. Nor has Government housing aid been available on a basis which would enable rural real estate developers to reduce construction costs under financing which would permit them to build multiple-unit housing developments.

Other programs of help in providing housing for rural America might include specially designed mobile homes; prefabricated homes; training programs to develop a larger supply of skilled construction labor in rural areas; part-time training for low-income citizens to develop construction skills to reduce construction and maintenance costs through self-help techniques; and experimental cooperative housing.

Comprehensive areawide health care programs should be expanded in countryside areas.

Local communities can take the lead in associating with nearby areas to develop expanded areawide services in hospital care, health services, nursing homes and professional medical care. Public health assistance should encourage this.

Increasing specialization and high overhead costs of health technology simply mean that some communities will never again have a local doctor or a local dentist. But they can still have the benefits of modern, improved health services through cooperative action with other communities in a rural development program.

These areawide services also can be linked with regional health centers in the larger population centers to bring a new level of health and medical care within the reach of countryside citizens.

We recommend that State legislatures and the Federal Government provide increased financial assistance and encouragement to both stu-

dents and colleges of medicine to train more people for work in the medical profession.

There is a shortage of doctors available for service in rural communities. This is due to a shortage of young people entering the field of medicine. Also university facilities may be inadequate to enroll additional students for such training.

We suggest that manpower training should be used to develop supporting allied health technicians, aides and lay personnel for rural development areas. Improved health career education programs and counseling should be added for rural youth. Special attention should be given to coordinating local emergency, first aid and rescue operations in countryside areas.

More stress should be placed on diagnostic testing, preventive care and medical attention for rural children. We encourage the development of multi-test mobile health laboratories for performing such tests as chest X-rays and blood pressure; checking hearing and vision; and running urinalysis and blood tests for detecting diabetes and anemia.

CHAPTER XI

Developing Natural Resources for People

There Should Be a Substantial Acceleration in the Development of Land and Water Resources Where Lagging Development in Natural Resources Is Impeding the Growth of Rural America

Whatever is done to develop rural America—whether rural industry, recreation, housing, transportation, or open space—it will be built on land and depend on water.

In dealing with the pressing emergencies that cry out for our immediate attention today, we cannot neglect the conservation and wise use of our natural resources if we are to be blessed with a beneficial environment and a better quality of life in the future in both rural and urban America. We live by and with these resources and we cannot live without them. The future quality of the America environment in the cities and in the country will be determined largely by the nature of the rural development that we have in the countryside—it will set the tone of new living in the country and it will ease the environmental pressures in cities.

The development of land, water, and mineral resources are necessary for an adequate supply of food and fiber, recreation, open space, wildlife, permanent and seasonal homes, employment and quality of environment in the years ahead.

We must expand the development of water resources for agriculture, industry, municipalities, and recreation; preserve clean air and natural beauty; improve forest management; and expand erosion control.

It is cheaper and easier for society to retain a desirable natural environment than it is to repair a damaged environment.

The Task Force recommends accelerated annual appropriations to develop more small watersheds each year and to provide adequate funds to complete the projects within the estimated work schedule. We especially

need to expand supplies of water for municipal and residential purposes and enhance recreation in nonmetropolitan areas.

The Watershed and Flood Prevention Act (Public Law 83–566) can potentially help develop a total of 8,000 small watersheds and the related human and natural resources of surrounding communities. Since Public Law 566 was enacted in 1954, 261 small watershed projects have been completed; 651 are under construction or in preconstruction; and 581 are being planned. This leaves 7,000 potential small watershed projects that could benefit rural development.

Success in rural development is directly related to an adequate supply of usable water for agricultural, municipal, industrial, and residential growth. Where clean water flows, opportunity grows.

The Task Force recommends annual funding for rural water and sewer facilities adequate to meet each year more of the soundly developed and approved applications received from rural communities.

Approximately 30,000 rural communities do not have adequate water systems; and about 45,000 are without sewer systems. Thousands of these are too small to even consider community systems. Others that could be growth areas, and which have a potential for industrial growth, are severely handicapped.

We recommend that the Small Reclamation Projects Act of 1956 be amended to enhance development of municipal, industrial and recreational water supplies.

These projects improve the efficiency of water use in existing small irrigation projects and provide other limited areas with better use of water for rural development.

We recommend that the benefit-cost formulas used to evaluate the feasibility of water resource projects be revised to include both primary and secondary costs and benefits, including water quality.

In the Flood Control Act of 1936, Congress declared that benefits should exceed costs in water and related land resource projects. In evaluating these benefits, continued attention should be paid to such factors as increases in national income that result from water supplies for domestic, municipal, industrial, and agricultural uses; navigation facilities; power; flood control; land stabilization; drainage; watershed protection; outdoor recreation; and fish and wildlife opportunities. Additional gains come from higher land value investments in industry, transportation, housing, recreation, increased employment, water quality control, and improved quality of environment. Primary and secondary cost and benefits should be considered in combination in evaluating projects.

We recommend development of a long-term program of forest resource management of private nonindustrial land, farm woodlands and forest

resources of public lands, including reforestation of economically marginal cropland.

We need forests to supply our needs in the 1980's and 1990's and beyond. We encourage the development and preservation of private and public woodlands for future timber and other multiple uses.

In order to fully use our land resources for all the people, we recommend that the concept of idle acres be supplanted with a concept of creative acres.

Today, we have 50 to 80 million excess acres of farm cropland that are not now needed for agricultural production. In our dynamic society which is mobilizing to meet human needs in developing rural areas, these surplus acres are one of our greatest assets. We should make the maximum use of interim retired acres through reforestation, game cover, recreation, and conservation. High priority should be given to additional parks, greenbelts, and intermediate recreational areas. The private sector should be encouraged to develop outdoor recreation, including the construction of ponds and the development of woodlots.

We recommend the prompt acceleration of the National Cooperative Soil Survey program until it is substantially completed; we also urge expediting the development of maps based on the surveys.

The soil survey is only about 40 percent completed. All land use planning—for farm and nonfarm purposes—depends on these basic surveys. It is vital in wise location of sites for residential, industrial, and public purposes. The soil survey mapping is lagging behind the survey work and should be speeded up.

This Task Force strongly recommends that existing laws dealing with the development of land and water resources, and our other natural resources, be amended to focus more clearly on the problems of the future as expressed in the total concern for the development of rural America. This means specific focus on the needs of people along with the concerns for agriculture which were paramount when these laws were initially enacted.

CHAPTER XII

Transportation for Faster Development

We Urge That Public Transportation Systems Outside of Metropolitan Districts Be Organized To Give Priority to the Economic Growth of Rural Development Areas

In general, we should plan our highways to lead the development in countryside areas rather than lagging behind development in a way that forces us into a "catch up" game. The farm-to-market roads of earlier times did much to develop the Nation, its wealth and its agriculture. This kind of vision, pioneer spirit and advance planning should be directed toward transportation that will stimulate rural development.

Efficient transportation is basic to an easy, rapid flow of resources into and out of countryside areas; it greatly increases the mobility of labor through "people-to-job" roads; it promotes dispersal of industry and counteracts the economic and social ills of urban compaction; it improves the quality of living and the environment for residents; and it gives people access to open space and recreation.

It is not unusual, where there are good highways, for people in rural areas to commute as far as 30 to 50 miles to jobs. This kind of mobility should be encouraged. These rural residents can continue to live in their established neighborhoods; they upgrade the economy and public services of their rural areas; and they do not add to the compaction in industrial centers.

The Task Force recommends that the Federal Highway Act be amended to provide for a classification in the Federal-State highway system to be designated "rural development highways." These new short-mileage highways should lead to existing highways, thereby serving local areas that have a high development potential.

Improved transportation can help a potential growth center attain viability and thereby reduce the distance people must travel, or move, to find employment. These highway systems also improve the linkage be-

tween small growth centers and larger urban areas, thus making them more attractive sites for industrial expansion. In many rural areas, these highways would improve the accessibility to a wide range of public and private services.

Present Federal-State highway systems have been developed largely from historical traffic patterns. Local areas with a high growth potential but with no highways—or inadequate highways—face little prospect of ever becoming linked to nearby major highways if they must hurdle a traffic-count criteria.

Rural development roads, although they would often be 30 miles or less in length, still are too large a financial undertaking for small communities and towns.

Rural development highways should be constructed on specifications similar to, but not above, requirements of Federal-State secondary highways. Funds should be allocated on a 50–50 Federal-State basis. Present administrative procedures should be applied, except that proposed rural development highway projects should require the concurrence of the State government, and a review and comment by appropriate State development and planning agencies.

The Task Force recommends that the President request the Interstate Commerce Commission to scrutinize all aspects of the rate structure of public carriers to serve the new national policies in rural growth and development.

The rate structure of public carriers hold a life-or-death decision over the future of an area, and over the competitive potential of individual businesses. Public carrier rates influence the location of new industries. These factors should be studied in relating rate structures to the desired development of countryside rural areas.

CHAPTER XIII

Research for a Better Rural Environment

The Task Force Recommends That More Research Be Directed Toward Vital Questions Where Answers Are Needed To Speed Up Rural Development

We have the information now to make great progress in rural development—but we need better information.

We need more research on how to help make community institutions in rural areas more vigorous.

We need better information on the cost efficiencies that can result from various forms of local government consolidation.

We need more research on low-cost housing for farm and rural areas; and more research on possible housing patterns in rural areas.

We need to know more about how people are motivated to work together to tackle projects and responsibilities in rural development; how leadership is developed in rural areas in transition; and how to develop more effective communication.

We need to know more about how off-farm income of farm people is used; its effect on influencing people to stay in farming, or leave farming; and its influence on farm people's residential location, participation in community activities, and leadership.

We need more information on the financing and management of privately owned rural recreational operations.

We need more research to discover how to use the excess acres of cropland more creatively for rural and urban people.

We need special information about effective methods of working with the least responsive, least motivated people in rural areas.

We need more information on what makes one rural town a viable, growing center and another a moribund declining area.

We need more experimentation in ways to help minority groups become full partners in the public and private development of their communities.

We need more research in pollution control; remote sensing (EROS program); weather modification; and desalinization of both water and soils.

We need more information on effective, low-cost water delivery systems and sewage disposal in countryside areas and small towns.

We need better data and measurement devices for assessing the economic and social effect on individuals and communities of establishing new industries in rural areas.

We need better information on how far farmers and other rural residents will travel for goods and services—thus establishing the boundaries of "trade centers."

We need more research on equitable taxation in rural areas—and methods of compensating those whose property values are reduced when their land is zoned into open space or recreation.

We need more research on the financing of governmental services in rural areas.

Those are some examples of research that would be helpful in proceeding soundly in rural development.

The Task Force recommends that the Department of Agriculture work with the State agricultural experiment stations in seeking substantially increased Hatch Act funds for human resources and community development research.

At present, only 1½ percent of the research goes toward human resources and community development; only 2 percent goes to studies on diet and nutrition.

The joint USDA/Land-Grant university and college system of research sponsorship has paid handsome dividends for commercial agricultural development. The applicable techniques and administrative structure that have worked so well for commercial agriculture should be turned on the problems of development for the rest of nonmetropolitan America.

The increasing responsibilities of the Extension Service in rural development should be backed up with research data in response to the new questions and pressing problems encountered by Extension. These are more "human" and "social" in nature than the traditional "technical" and commodity-oriented research questions handled by Land-Grant institutions. The new research needs require a broader range of disciplines and a deeper involvement of more college departments than ever.

Cooperative regional and interregional efforts should be marshaled to achieve the depth and competence needed for human resource and community development research. Such programs will enable graduate students to become familiar with rural development problems on a multistate basis.

We strongly urge that the research needs for rural development be met insofar as practical by a redirection of authorizations and funds now being allocated to less pressing needs by all departments and agencies in government.

The Task Force recommends that the National Science Foundation make specific research grants for institutional development at those institutions showing greatest promise of developing multidisciplinary rural community development as well as human resource development research programs.

Appendix A

Meeting Schedule of the Task Force on Rural Development*

September 27–28, 1969
October 18–19, 1969
October 31–November 1, 1969
November 16–17, 1969
November 29–30, 1969
January 3–4, 1970

*All meetings were held in Washington, D.C.

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